

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 5**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

**Northstar Ethanol LLC  
d/b/a POET Biorefining – Lake Crystal  
19200 499<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Lake Crystal, Minnesota 56066**

**ATTENTION:**

**Mr. Matt Fodness  
Technical Manager**

**Request to Provide Information Pursuant to the Clean Air Act**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is requiring Northstar Ethanol LLC d/b/a POET Biorefining – Lake Crystal (POET or you) to submit certain information about the facility at 19200 499<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Lake Crystal, Minnesota. Appendix A provides the instructions needed to answer this information request, including instructions for electronic submissions. Appendix B specifies the information that you must submit. You must send this information to us within 30 calendar days after you receive this request.

We are issuing this information request under Section 114(a) of the Clean Air Act (the CAA), 42 U.S.C. § 7414(a). Section 114(a) authorizes the Administrator of EPA to require the submission of information. The Administrator has delegated this authority to the Director of the Air and Radiation Division, Region 5.

POET owns and operates an emission source at the Lake Crystal, Minnesota, facility. We are requesting this information to determine whether your emission source is complying with the Minnesota State Implementation Plan and the Clean Air Act.

POET must send all required information to:

Attn: Compliance Tracker, AE-17J  
Air Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Branch  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 5  
77 W. Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

POET must submit all required information under an authorized signature with the following certification:

I certify under penalty of law that I have examined and am familiar with the information in the enclosed documents, including all attachments. Based on my inquiry of those individuals with primary responsibility for obtaining the information, I certify that the statements and information are, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for knowingly submitting false statements and information, including the possibility of fines or imprisonment pursuant to Section 113(c)(2) of the Clean Air Act and 18 U.S.C. §§ 1001 and 1341.

As explained more fully in Appendix C, you may assert a claim of business confidentiality under 40 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart B for any part of the information you submit to us. Information subject to a business confidentiality claim is available to the public only to the extent, and by means of the procedures, set forth at 40 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart B. If you do not assert a business confidentiality claim when you submit the information, EPA may make this information available to the public without further notice. You should be aware, moreover, that pursuant to Section 114(c) of the CAA and 40 C.F.R. § 2.301(a) and (f), emissions data, standards and limitations are not entitled to confidential treatment and shall be made available to the public notwithstanding any assertion of a business confidentiality claim. Appendix C provides additional information regarding the meaning and scope of the term “emissions data.”

This information request is not subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. § 3501 *et seq.*, because it seeks collection of information from specific individuals or entities as part of an administrative action or investigation.

We may use any information submitted in response to this request in an administrative, civil or criminal action.

Failure to comply fully with this information request may subject POET to an enforcement action under Section 113 of the CAA, 42 U.S.C. § 7413.

You should direct any questions about this information request to Eleanor Kane at (312) 353-4840.

Date

5/4/15

  
George T. Czerniak  
Director  
Air and Radiation Division

## **Appendix A**

When providing the information requested in Appendix B, use the following instructions and definitions.

### **Instructions**

1. Provide a separate narrative response to each question and subpart of a question set forth in Appendix B.
2. Precede each answer with the number of the question to which it corresponds and at the end of each answer, identify the person(s) who provided information used or considered in responding to that question, as well as each person consulted in the preparation of that response.
3. Indicate on each document produced, or in some other reasonable manner, the number of the question to which it corresponds.
4. When a response is provided in the form of a number, specify the units of measure of the number in a precise manner.
5. Where information or documents necessary for a response are neither in your possession nor available to you, indicate in your response why the information or documents are not available or in your possession, and identify any source that either possesses or is likely to possess the documents or information.
6. If information not known or not available to you as of the date of submission later becomes known or available to you, you must supplement your response. Moreover, should you find at any time after the submission of your response that any portion of the submitted information is false or incorrect, you must notify EPA as soon as possible.

### **Electronic Submissions**

To aid in our electronic recordkeeping efforts, we request that you provide all documents responsive to this information request in an electronic format according to paragraphs 1 through 6, below. These submissions are in lieu of hard copy.

1. Provide all responsive documents in Portable Document Format (PDF) or similar format, unless otherwise requested in specific questions. If the PDFs are scanned images, perform at least Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for "image over text" to allow the document to be searchable. Submitters providing secured PDFs should also provide unsecured versions for EPA use in repurposing text.
2. When specific questions request data in electronic spreadsheet form, provide the data and corresponding information in editable Excel or Lotus format, and not in image format. If Excel or Lotus formats are not available, then the format should allow for data to be used in calculations by a standard spreadsheet program such as Excel or Lotus.

3. Provide submission on physical media such as compact disk, flash drive or other similar item.
4. Provide a table of contents for each compact disk or flash drive containing electronic documents submitted in response to our request so that each document can be accurately identified in relation to your response to a specific question. We recommend the use of electronic file folders organized by question number. In addition, each compact disk or flash drive should be labeled appropriately (e.g., Company Name, Disk 1 of 4 for Information Request Response, Date of Response).
5. Documents claimed as confidential business information (CBI) must be submitted on separate disks/drives apart from the non-confidential information. This will facilitate appropriate records management and appropriate handling and protection of the CBI. Please follow the instructions in Appendix C for designating information as CBI.
6. Certify that the attached files have been scanned for viruses and indicate what program was used.

### **Definitions**

All terms used in this information request have their ordinary meaning unless such terms are defined in the CAA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 7401 *et seq.*

1. The terms “document” and “documents” shall mean any object that records, stores, or presents information, and includes writings, memoranda, records, or information of any kind, formal or informal, whether wholly or partially handwritten or typed, whether in computer format, memory, or storage device, or in hardcopy, including any form or format of these. If in computer format or memory, each such document shall be provided in translation to a form useable and readable by EPA, with all necessary documentation and support. All documents in hard copy should also include attachments to or enclosures with any documents.
2. The terms “relate to” or “pertain to” (or any form thereof) shall mean constituting, reflecting, representing, supporting, contradicting, referring to, stating, describing, recording, noting, embodying, containing, mentioning, studying, analyzing, discussing, evaluating or relevant to.

## Appendix B

### Information You Are Required to Submit to EPA

POET must submit the following information about the Lake Crystal facility pursuant to Section 114(a) of the CAA, 42 U.S.C. § 7414(a), within 30 days of receiving this request.

1. Provide map(s) or drawing(s), identifying all air emissions sources and associated processes at the facility, including, but not limited to: grain receiving and handling operations, corn storage bins, hammer mills, fermentation processes, thermal oxidizers, distillation processes, dryers, ethanol loading systems, scrubbers, baghouses, and tanks.
2. Provide a copy of each current air permit issued to POET for the facility by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) including, but not limited to, operating permits, construction permits, and permit amendments.
3. Provide a copy of all permit applications submitted to MPCA since March 2005.
4. Provide copies of all annual emissions reports submitted to MPCA for the facility from 2009 to the present, and include:
  - a. A narrative describing the method used for the annual emissions calculations for each pollutant, including the basis of any emissions factors used; and
  - b. Any documents outlining procedures for calculating annual emissions.
5. Provide a list of all emissions tests conducted at the facility for any reason, from March 2005 to the present, and provide copies of all emissions test reports. Emission testing includes, but is not limited to, compliance testing, engineering testing, and testing for general information. Use the following guidelines for compiling the list and preparing copies of the stack test reports:
  - a. **List:** Identify the emissions unit, the date of the test, the federal or state regulation requiring the test (if applicable), the test method(s) used, the physical location of the sample collection points (e.g., before or after emission unit or air pollution control device), and the production rate of the associated emission unit. For each test during which the emission unit was not operating at maximum design capacity, provide an explanation for why production was limited. Indicate whether the report was shared with MPCA.
  - b. **Copies:** Provide full stack test reports, including the summary pages, the section describing the process parameters and production or processing rates at the time of the test, all test runs, and all calculations.
6. Provide copies of any Method 9 (visible emissions or opacity) readings performed at the facility from March 2010 to the present.

7. Provide copies of all quarterly reports, semi-annual compliance reports, deviation reports, or equivalent documents submitted to MPCA or EPA for the facility since March 2010.
8. Provide records of monthly and 12-month rolling emissions of individual Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAP) and total HAP emissions for March 2010 to the present. Provide an explanation for how the numbers are calculated, including the source of any emissions factors used.
9. Provide records of the 12-month rolling sum of the following for March 2009 to the present:
  - a. Ethanol production, without denaturant (gallons/year); and
  - b. Corn throughput, based on 56 pounds per bushel (tons/year)
10. Provide a copy of the current operations and maintenance plan for each piece of air pollution control equipment.
11. Provide an electronic spreadsheet with the following information for the wet scrubber (CE007) from March 2010 to the present:
  - a. The recorded pressure drop across the scrubber;
  - b. The pressure drop operating range, established for regulatory compliance, the method used to establish the values (reference performance test as applicable), and the effective date of these operating limits;
  - c. The corrective action taken for each deviation from the pressure drop operating range;
  - d. The scrubber liquid flow rate and, for each reading, whether or not emissions were vented to the RTO;
  - e. The minimum scrubber liquid flow rate established for regulatory compliance, the method used to establish the values (reference performance test as applicable), and the effective date of these operating limits;
  - f. The corrective action taken for each deviation from the minimum scrubber water flow rate; and
  - g. The date and duration of all scrubber shutdowns.
12. Explain how emissions ducted to the wet scrubber (CE007) are handled in the event of a scrubber shutdown.
13. Provide performance test data (unless provided in response to Request 5) and engineering calculations documenting the volatile organic compound control efficiency of the wet scrubber (CE007) when emissions are not vented to the regenerative thermal oxidizer (RTO).
14. Provide an electronic spreadsheet with the following information for the RTO (CE008) from March 2010 to the present:
  - a. Daily records showing the hours of and reasons for the by-passing of the RTO by some or all of the emissions from Fermentation and Distillation (GP003);
  - b. Records of any corrective action taken in response to an RTO bypass;

- c. The recorded operating temperature the three-hour rolling average temperature;
  - d. The minimum operating temperatures established for regulatory compliance, the method used to establish the values (reference performance test as applicable), and the effective date of these operating limits;
  - e. The corrective action taken for each deviation from minimum operating temperature;
  - f. Records of the calibration of the temperature monitor; and
  - g. Records of the quarterly and annual inspections of the control equipment;
15. Provide the following information for each of the fabric filters in the group GP-006, from March 2010 to the present:
- a. Calculations or assessments of the unit's capture efficiency and control efficiency for total particulate matter, particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM10), and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM2.5);
  - b. The pressure drop operating range established for regulatory compliance, the method used to establish the values (reference performance test as applicable), and the effective date of these operating limits;
  - c. Records of visible emissions checks;
  - d. The recorded pressure drop across the filters;
  - e. The corrective action taken for each deviation from the pressure drop operating range or any visible emissions; and
  - f. Records of control equipment component inspections and annual hood evaluations.
16. For March 2010 to the present, provide the hourly beer feed rate to the Dryers (PG008).
17. For March 2010 to the present, provide records for use of the Dryer A Emergency Bypass (SV013), Dryer B Emergency Bypass (SV019), and the Centrifuge Emergency Bypass (SV015). For each bypass event, include the date, start time, duration, facility operating conditions during the use, and any root-cause failure analysis report submitted to MPCA.
18. For March 2010 to the present, provide daily records showing the events during which some or all of the emissions from the DDGS Fluid Bed Cooler (EU043) bypassed the dryer burners (EU040 and EU041) and the auxiliary boiler burners (EU046 and EU054). Record should show the event duration, in hours, and the reason for the bypass.
19. For March 2010 to the present, provide records of the Loadout Flare (EU047) operations, including the daily number of hours and the twelve month rolling total number of hours.
20. Provide the following information for each of the fabric filter CE-001, from March 2010 to the present:
- a. Calculations or assessments of the units control efficiency for total particulate matter, particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM10), and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM2.5);



- b. The pressure drop-operating-range established for regulatory compliance, the method used to establish the values (reference performance test as applicable), and the effective date of these operating limits;
  - c. Records of visible emissions checks;
  - d. The recorded pressure drop across the filters;
  - e. The corrective action taken for each deviation from the pressure drop operating range or any visible emissions; and
  - f. Records of control equipment component inspections.
- 21. From March 2005 to the present, provide the total annual production capacity (in million gallons of denatured ethanol) for the facility. For months when the total capacity increased from the previous month, provide a brief explanation for the cause of the increase.
- 22. From March 2010 to the present, provide a list of operational changes made at the fermentation processes, including changes to the enzymes or microbes used in the process. For each change on the list, provide:
  - a. The date the change was implemented;
  - b. A description of the change;
  - c. An estimate of the impact on air emissions from the fermentation process and an explanation of how the estimate was calculated; and
  - d. Whether the change resulted in an increase of production.
- 23. For the facility's leak detection and repair program, provide the following, from the facility's first day of operation to the present:
  - a. A copy of all applicable notifications and reporting documents required by 40 C.F.R. § 60.487a;
  - b. Any permit deviation reports (quarterly compliance reports); and
  - c. A copy of the most recent leaking components monitoring log, which lists all components tested and the 325998 status of each component inspected during the monitoring period.
- 24. Provide the following documents related to 40 C.F.R. Part 63, Subpart VVVVVV, National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Chemical Manufacturing Area Sources:
  - a. Any Notification of Compliance Status submitted pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 63.1150(b);
  - b. All records kept pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 63.1150(c), from January 2013 to the present;
  - c. Any Semi-Annual Compliance Reports submitted pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 63.1150(d) from January 2013 to the present; and
  - d. If there are no documents responsive to a, b, and c, above, provide documentation demonstrating that the source is not subject to the rule.

## **Appendix C**

### **Confidential Business and Personal Privacy Information**

#### **Assertion Requirements**

You may assert a business confidentiality claim covering any parts of the information requested in the attached Appendix B, as provided in 40 C.F.R. § 2.203(b).

Emission data provided under Section 114 of the CAA, 42 U.S.C. § 7414, is not entitled to confidential treatment under 40 C.F.R. Part 2.

“Emission data” means, with reference to any source of emissions of any substance into the air:

Information necessary to determine the identity, amount, frequency, concentration or other characteristics (to the extent related to air quality) of any emission which has been emitted by the source (or of any pollutant resulting from any emission by the source), or any combination of the foregoing;

Information necessary to determine the identity, amount, frequency, concentration or other characteristics (to the extent related to air quality) of the emissions which, under an applicable standard or limitation, the source was authorized to emit (including to the extent necessary for such purposes, a description of the manner and rate of operation of the source); and

A general description of the location and/or nature of the source to the extent necessary to identify the source and to distinguish it from other sources (including, to the extent necessary for such purposes, a description of the device, installation, or operation constituting the source).

40 C.F.R. § 2.301(a)(2)(i)(A), (B) and (C).

To make a confidentiality claim, submit the requested information and indicate that you are making a claim of confidentiality. Any document for which you make a claim of confidentiality should be marked by attaching a cover sheet stamped or typed with a caption or other suitable form of notice to indicate the intent to claim confidentiality. The stamped or typed caption or other suitable form of notice should employ language such as “trade secret” or “proprietary” or “company confidential” and indicate a date, if any, when the information should no longer be treated as confidential. Information covered by such a claim will be disclosed by EPA only to the extent permitted and by means of the procedures set forth at Section 114(c) of the CAA and 40 C.F.R. Part 2. Allegedly confidential portions of otherwise non-confidential documents should be clearly identified. EPA will construe the failure to furnish a confidentiality claim with your response to the Request to Provide Information as a waiver of that claim, and the information may be made available to the public without further notice to you.

## Determining Whether the Information is Entitled to Confidential Treatment

All confidentiality claims are subject to EPA verification and must be made in accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 2.208, which provides in part that you must satisfactorily show that you have taken reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of the information and that you intend to continue to do so; that the information is not and has not been reasonably obtainable by legitimate means without your consent and that disclosure of the information is likely to cause substantial harm to your business's competitive position.

Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart B, EPA may at any time send you a letter asking that you support your confidential business information (CBI) claim. If you receive such a letter, you must respond within the number of days specified by EPA. Failure to submit your comments within that time would be regarded as a waiver of your confidentiality claim or claims, and EPA may release the information. If you receive such a letter, EPA will ask you to specify which portions of the information you consider confidential **by page, paragraph, and sentence**. Any information not specifically identified as subject to a confidentiality claim may be disclosed to the requestor without further notice to you. For each item or class of information that you identify as being CBI, EPA will ask that you answer the following questions, giving as much detail as possible:

1. For what period of time do you request that the information be maintained as confidential, e.g., until a certain date, until the occurrence of a special event, or permanently? If the occurrence of a specific event will eliminate the need for confidentiality, please specify that event.
2. Information submitted to EPA becomes stale over time. Why should the information you claim as confidential be protected for the time period specified in your answer to question number 1?
3. What measures have you taken to protect the information claimed as confidential? Have you disclosed the information to anyone other than a governmental body or someone who is bound by an agreement not to disclose the information further? If so, why should the information still be considered confidential?
4. Is the information contained in any publicly available databases, promotional publications, annual reports or articles? Is there any means by which a member of the public could obtain access to the information? Is the information of a kind that you would customarily not release to the public?
5. Has any governmental body made a determination as to confidentiality of the information? If so, please attach a copy of the determination.
6. For each category of information claimed as confidential, **explain with specificity** why release of the information is likely to cause substantial harm to your competitive position. Explain the specific nature of those harmful effects, why they should be viewed as substantial and the causal relationship between disclosure and such harmful effects. How could your competitors make use of this information to your detriment?

7. Do you assert that the information is submitted on a voluntary or a mandatory basis? Please explain the reason for your assertion. If you assert that the information is voluntarily submitted information, explain whether and why disclosure of the information would tend to lessen the availability to EPA of similar information in the future.
8. Is there any other information you deem relevant to EPA's determination regarding your claim of business confidentiality?

If you receive a request for a substantiation letter from the EPA, **you bear the burden of substantiating your confidentiality claim.** Conclusory allegations will be given little or no weight in the determination. In substantiating your CBI claim(s), you must bracket all text so claimed and mark it "CBI." Information so designated will be disclosed by EPA only to the extent allowed by and by means of the procedures set forth in 40 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart B. If you fail to claim the information as confidential, it may be made available to the public without further notice to you.

### **Personal Privacy Information**

Please segregate any personnel, medical and similar files from your responses and include that information on a separate sheet(s) marked as "Personal Privacy Information." Disclosure of such information to the general public may constitute an invasion of privacy.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

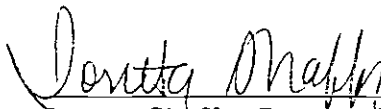
I, Loretta Shaffer, certify that I sent a Request to Provide Information Pursuant to the  
Clean Air Act by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, to:

Mr. Matt Fodness  
Northstar Ethanol LLC d/b/a POET  
19200 499<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Lake Crystal, MN 56055

I also certify that I sent a copy of the Request to Provide Information Pursuant to the  
Clean Air Act by First-Class Mail to:

Katie Koelfgen  
Manager, Land and Air Compliance  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
520 Lafayette Road North

On the 7 day of May 2015.



Loretta Shaffer, Program Technician  
AECAB, PAS

CERTIFIED MAIL RECEIPT NUMBER: 7014 2870 0001 9580 4992